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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

## INFORMATION REPORT

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SOURCE [REDACTED]

1.

[REDACTED] Enclosure (A) is a sketch of the airfield area. The school occupied a large three-story brick building. There were 400 students in the school, of whom 200 were observer-pilots and 200 technicians. Classes for both groups were held in the same classrooms, but at different hours, according to schedule. The classrooms were equipped with the frame of an R.Z.T. airplane, with Dekhtyarov and Sh.K.S. machine guns and M-34 and M-17 engines.

[REDACTED] also had classes in geography, political training, and physics in a special laboratory. There were flying charts for the observer-pilots.

2.

The area occupied by the brigade was divided into three sections: the airfield, the military cantonment, and the workmen's village. Each section was fenced off from the others with barbed wire. In order to go from one section to another, military personnel had to show passes, while the rules for civilians were even stricter. The only time passes were not checked was when columns marched in formation.

3.

The brigade was located about five kilometers from Chernigov, near Konotop. The airfield was located near a railroad, not far from a railroad station. The railroad tracks lay alongside the airfield. The brigade proper occupied a rather large area. The airfield had five or six large hangars and each hangar housed one squadron of R.Z.T. planes (over 20 planes). The brigade comprised four squadrons, Nos 18, 19, 20 and 21. In addition, the General Staff had its own squadron. In addition to the General Staff for the entire installation, each squadron had its own staff. The Konotop school had 17 instructors. The brigade had a chief military engineer, each squadron had its own engineer, each section its own chief technician, and each plane a technician. There were teams of armorers, who examined the armament of the planes. Each training flight of a section was attended by seven or eight pilots. The flights were scheduled for one squadron at a time and took half a day. Many new fliers arrived each year; they were graduates of aviation schools in various parts of the Soviet Union and came for practical training. Upon graduation they received the rank of pilots of various categories and were appointed by Moscow to other military combat units. The brigade had old regulars who were the instructors, and young pilots and mechanics.

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4. There were also other buildings at the airport; underground gasoline dumps and storage space for gasoline in barrels; ammunition dumps; depots for M-34 and M-17 engines; arsenals; and storage space for bombs. Some of the bombs were stored underground in out-of-the-way places for safety in case of premature explosions.
5. The military cantonment included a school for flight technicians, a rifle company, a motor transport company, a refueling company, radio-communication signal men, and parachutists. All the buildings were three stories high and made of brick. The cantonment also had a repair shop for motors and four testing stations where the engines were tested with the propellers attached. There was also a club, a hospital, and a Red Army House, which held over three thousand soldiers. Leaders and officers, with or without families, lived in about 15 residential brick buildings. Also, there was a store for the officers.
6. The workers' village was separated from the cantonment by a wooden fence. There were 14 wooden barracks which accommodated the married workers employed by the brigade. There was a stone wall in front of these buildings and the other sides were enclosed by wire fences.
7. In cold weather it was absolutely necessary to drain the radiator when the plane was placed in the hangar. When the plane was made ready for flight, the technicians filled the engine with hot water and hot oil, as this was the only way to start the engine. The engine was started with compressed air. The R.Z.T. plane was flown in the Spanish revolutionary war and gave a good performance (so we were told at the lectures). 25X1
8. [redacted] to Baku, to the airfield at Baladzhar Station, about 35 kilometers from the town. Shortly afterwards some of the military personnel were transferred to the civilian airfield at Mardakyany. Later some 20 planes of the very latest design, types I-15 and I-16, arrived at this airfield and both old and new flight personnel were put into training for the handling of these planes. The technical staff also had to go through a training course which included a study of the plane, its engines and armament. 25X1
9. After the period of training, which lasted about six months, all the military personnel located at Mardakyany were moved to the station Nasosnyy, about 65 kilometers from Baku. The new airfield lay near the railroad and close to the Baku Highway. The area of the airfield was not definite. There were no fences but there was an entrance gate.
10. The staff at the airfield was not large. A two-floor brick building and three large three-floor buildings were occupied by a rifle company and signal men on regular duty. There were no hangars or supply depots but only a few movable wooden huts containing technical equipment, and several stone buildings across the road, in the park. All these buildings belonged to the military and were used for all kinds of military training.
11. In the park and beyond the park, some 20 buildings for the military personnel were being built, but only four or five were completed. Men with families had great difficulty in obtaining lodgings.
12. The brigade was located about one kilometer from the Caspian Sea. Formerly tens of thousands of oil workers came to this place for a rest. There also used to be fishing boats near the shore, but after the establishment of a military aviation base, and an artillery emplacement higher up on the mountains, the Nasosnyy Station became a restricted zone. A military proving ground was set up on the sea shore and here planes practiced firing at moving targets.

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13. The brigade grew rapidly. Reinforcements were arriving and the number of I-15 and I-16 planes reached one hundred in early 1939. Another military unit, consisting of medium twin-engine bombers, joined us. In June of 1939, model I-17 planes arrived at the Baku airfield, Baladzhar, in closed railroad cars. After the planes were unloaded the engineering-technical staff and the military inspector condemned the lot of them. Before these new planes arrived, a large caliber machine gun "Pushka", firing through the screw of the ratchet; this machine gun was called Sh.P.K. (Shpital'niy, Pavlov and Kamarnitskiy). Plane model I-17-bis was tested a few months before at the Baku airfield by the pilot Chkalov.

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ENCLOSURE (A): Sketch of Airfield Area

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